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DANGER SIGNAL

A national calamity is in the making, according to Lewis L. Strauss, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, unless the United States does something to offset Russia's training of scientists and engineers.

He quoted figures from Allen Dulles, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, who said in the decade ending in 1960 Soviet Russia will graduate 1.2 million scientists and engineers compared with 900,000 in the United States.

Strauss asserted that America is training only half as many engineers as it needs today.

The strange feature is that immediately after World War II U. S. colleges were jammed with ex-GIs studying engineering. Then, about 1948, some government and non-government "prophets of gloom and doom" decided there would be a tremendous surplus of engineers unless youngsters were enticed away from such studies.

They based this belief on the premise that the economy was headed for a contraction—a depression. They did not foresee the Korean War and greatly stepped up spending for defense.

There was no depression, but students were diverted to other fields. Now warnings are issued with increasing frequency that a shortage of scientists and engineers looms.

America's great world leadership in technology is not yet threatened because of the tremendous start this country had. But Russia is doing its best to catch up and within a decade or two might pass the U. S., unless steps are taken now to increase interest in related studies by students.